Aristasia Treasure Trove

The Philosophy of Dress Tuesday, Sep 1 2009

Aristasian Fashion and Style and Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia12:56 pm

Insights often come in a flash. What I mean by that is that a very important idea may often be conveyed to one in an instant, as a sudden vision or apprehension of the true nature of things. I suspect that happens to all of us. The difficult part is following up that insight: grasping it between one's teeth and methodically shaking out the meaning of it. This activity is what is called philosophy. At least it is the feminine and spiritual approach to philosophy: taking the insights or intuitions that are granted to us and diligently teasing out their full meaning.

Such an insight came to me yesterday. There has always been a lot of philosophical work and discussion in Aristasia on the subject of dress and its real meaning, : on why bongos dress as they do, what it signifies about their culture and how it helps to create the spiritual and psychological conditions that are the Pit. Yesterday I accompanied my friend to the post office and I was watching a group of bongos shuffling about in their jeans, soft, floppy clothes and bits of tracksuit, and suddenly an insight came to me. At first it seemed like a very strange one.

"These people are naked!" I suddenly realised. It seemed like an odd thought, because obviously they were wearing clothes. Admittedly that is giving the word "clothes" an exceptionally broad definition, but they were undeniably wearing *something*. Now of course this insight was not unaware of that. It was saying "These are not *clothed* people. They are naked bodies with some rags thrown over them. They are *essentially* naked. And they are not naked like a classical nude in a painting. They are naked in the way that cats and dogs and monkeys are naked."

I knew what I was seeing was true, but it was hard to make rational sense of it. After all, to say a clothed person is a naked person with clothes on is surely a tautology. Cannot one say that of *any* clothed person from the 1930s or from ancient Greece? No, this insight was saying. Not in the same way. Those people were authentically dressed these people in front of me were not. They were just

naked bodies with odd bits of cloth thrown over them. The comparison that had been in my mind when I first saw them was a reference in a Quirinelle book to "the hour at which ladies like to dress for cocktails". Such ladies *dressed*; these people did not dress. They just put things onto what they still regarded as mere bodies in the animal sense: essentially naked.

Why was that the case? I asked myself. Was it something to do with their loose and casual attitudes to what they call "sex"? Or was that too simple an answer?

I tried to explain the answer to a brunette friend, partly because having to explain an idea often forces it to be clarified. We started to analyse it. What was the fundamental difference between *dressed* people — whether in the 1950s at the cocktail hour, or at any other hour, or in the eighteenth century, or in Mandarin China, or in a tribal society — from these "naked apes" with clothes on?

Suddenly it began to make sense. By going back to more ancient societies we were taking the thing back to its roots. We were applying the principles of Essentialist thought. If one looks at the earlier societies, it is clear that dress is a *ritual* thing. In tribes, adornment may represent what are called "totem animals" (actually the animal embodiments of Janyati or Archetypes), they also represent status within the order of the tribe, which is conceived as a microcosm of the order of the cosmos. The tasselled fringes worn by some Red Indian tribes represent the sun's rays, with all the metaphysical significance of solarity. Dress in old China was carefully regulated by ritual considerations and those of social function, which — as everywhere else, including the Mediaeval West — was seen not only as reflecting, but as being organically related to the functioning of the cosmos itself.

By the time we get to the Renaissance West, these ritual considerations are waning. We are moving from a Sattwic to a Rajasic society. But as is the case in every aspect of Rajasic society, it continues to reflect, in its outward-directed forms, the upward-directed prototypes of it Sattwic roots. They are increasingly unaware of the spiritual and metaphysical significance of their dress — which is now vestigial — but the thread is still not broken. Even in the 1950s, on the very verge of the Eclipse, women dress for cocktails, men go to business carefully attired with bowler hats and furled umbrellas. Postmen, policemen, cinema usherettes and dozens of other functionaries (and I use this term in the positive and vestigially-Sattwic sense of "performers of functions within the Great Order") are meticulously uniformed. Evening dress is worn for theatre, opera and dining at good restaurants and hotels, but even at the local cinema and *palais de dance* (vulgarly termed "the pally") people are conscious of "going out" and dress accordingly.

What we are saying is that all these people are *dressed* in the same sense that a tribal dancer, a Chinese mandarin or a mediaeval courtier is dressed. The thread is diminished but as yet unbroken. With the eclipse and the onset of a Tamasic society, the thread, in dress as in most other things, is broken. People are no longer dressed in the true sense of the word. In a Sattwic society, as Dr Coomaraswamy often said, "body and soul are served together". The objects of craft, whether a drinking-bowl or a chariot, have both functional and metaphysical significance. In a Rajasic society, the ritual (or intellectual) significance of the products of human art and craft is increasingly forgotten; but there is still a sense of *rightness* that links them back to their Sattwic origins. And of all artefacts, clothes are the closest to us — both literally and figuratively.

If we look at the typical bongo clothes they are, in their own words designed to be "casual" and to reject the element of *form* (that is why they are called *informal*). In theory their design is for comfort and convenience and many bongos do choose their dress for those reasons (or at least imagine that

they do). In this respect, bongo clothes are precisely "animal" in nature because they are designed to perform the same functions as a non-human creature's fur or feathers — simply to keep her warm and be as convenient as possible in all ways.

Now as soon as one says this, it is clear that even the term "animal" requires some qualification. The function of bongo clothes does not correspond to the *real* function of animal skin. It corresponds to the notion of animal skin held by the post-Darwinian mind. The notion that animals are simply "functional units designed* for survival" and that the best functional units are the ones that survive. This is not what tradition teaches us about animals. From tradition we learn what every traditional people knows: that animals embody particular *qualities*. Thus their fur or feathers, like human artefacts, have both a functional and a symbolic aspect. So when we said at the beginning that bongo dress resembles the nakedness of dogs, cats or monkeys, we were, in fact taking an unfairly low view of dogs, cats and monkeys. They are in fact more *dressed* in the true meaning of the term, than the bongo wearing what are termed Pit-pyjamas. Their fur is not merely functional. It is part of the expression of the fundamental reality that lies behind dog-ness or cat-ness, while the Eclipse has precisely revolted against the expression of fundamental realities through outward appearance.

This is yet another illustration of the dictum that maid, as the Axial creature of this world, has the power to rise above the earthly state, *or to fall below it*. Sattwic humanity seeks to express realities that transcend the worldly plane. Animals cannot do this. Rajasic humanity reflects the earthly plane in all its beauty and variety, and, of course the earthly plane is the reflection of the heavenly. This is what animal also do, on a very different level. Tamasic humanity turns away from the earthly plane in the *downward* direction. Animals cannot do this either. They cannot desert their *thamë*, their natural worldly function, either by transcending it or by falling below it. In this respect, Tamasic humanity is below the animal level.

So how does Tamasic humanity fall below the animal level in its dress? In the first place by adopting a dress that is (in theory at least) solely functional and stripped of all symbolic depth no animal can do this. Secondly bongo dress often finds ways to fall below even this level: jeans are bought deliberately faded and torn, for example, expressing the desire not for simple functionality but for chaos and dissolution. Clothes are worn with jokes or commercial slogans spelled out across their fronts, not merely serving the functions of comfort and warmth, but also insulting the dignity of the wearer and turning her into something trivial and foolish. Clothes are often unnecessarily baggy and floppy, to a point where they must surely become cumbersome and inconvenient. In the quest for *symbolic* looseness and degeneration, the *actual* function of "comfort and convenience is left behind. I am sure the reader can supply many examples of her own, some of which we may be unaware of.

So is it true to say that nobody in the Pit is dressed? No. Businessmen, for example, are still dressed to express their function in a manner that is vestigially Rajasic. But note that this is under attack with "dressing down days", "informal offices" etc. The Pit has an inbuilt instinct to attack everything that is vestigially Rajasic, and we can expect to see the business suit coming under increasing attack**. It is common for bongos to refer to business people disparagingly as "suits".

The use of the term "suits" is deeply significant. The implication is that the person wearing a suit has simply *become* the suit. He is no longer a person, just a "suit". What is the reason for this perception? It is rooted in the Pit's hatred of Archetypes and of the concept of conforming to what it calls a "stereotype". It fears that in adopting the dress suitable to a function, the individual will be somehow swallowed up by the function and cease to exist. It has often been pointed out that the bongo in her loose, floppy clothes or her jeans and T-shirt is just as conformist as the most rigidly-uniformed functionary. Her style of dress is dictated from outside and is necessary for social acceptance within

particular bongo groups. The illusory "individualism" she has been taught to value is as stereotyped and mass-produced as any other form of conformity. When bongos dress differently from other bongos it is almost always in conformity with some particular group or sub-set within the Pit, often associated with some form of commercially-produced music.

Some might, therefore, be tempted to say that bongo "casual" dress is the exact equivalent of uniforms, suits or real-world fashions — both being the prescribed dress of a particular group or culture. However this is not actually the case. While both are equally prescribed, one is the dress of form, and the other is the dress of anti-form: and while anti-form is just as much a conformity as form, it does not thereby become a form. The "informal" or a-formal bongo is very consciously not "dressed" in the sense that a person from the real world is dressed. She often fears dress as something that might rob her of the looseness she mistakes for "freedom". Being dressed is a form of mask, and any mask might take away one's "real self".

The problem is that this "real self" is illusory, as one can see by looking at any group of bongo type-3s. How different are they from each other in their attitudes, manners, beliefs or behaviour? Among smartly dressed real people one finds far more variety of personality, far more distinctness. By rejecting form, one becomes a rootless, unfixed creature that can be blown about by every passing wind of propaganda, every new slogan or catch-phrase, every new fad or pseudo-morality. One becomes the perfect, rootless, manipulable proletarian.

NOTES

* Even the word "designed" is only used figuratively, since the theory asks us to believe that there is no intelligent "design" and that a dog evolved from a protozoon by a series of survival-related "accidents". Actually many biologists now deny this rather extraordinary notion; but we are concerned here with the popular view of animals as derived from what the average person imagines evolutionism to be saying: for it is this that has shaped the current belief as to what an animal is.

** It is possible however, that even some elements in the Pit are aware that a degree of Rajasic culture and formality needs to be retained if bongo administration is to remain functional, which may account for the almost anachronistic survival of the business suit to the present time. Curiously, what is being recognised here is that the "functionalist" view of dress leads, in practice, to dysfunctional behaviour.

Leave a Response »

Tea and Universal Sympathy Monday, Aug 24 2009

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia4:27 pm

It has been suggested that there is a particular similarity between Aristasian culture in general (and Novarian culture in particular) and the traditional culture of Japan. Sushuri-chei offers some thoughts on this connexion based on the "structural assumptions" of the Japanese language.

Let us take a very simple example, and you will see that the same principle applies to a lot of japanese constructions.

I like tea = Watashi wa ocha ga suki desu

The two sentences are equivalent, but the Japanese, if I understand correctly, actually means "In relation to me, tea takes the action of being liked".

Now this is a very important difference. The Western form places the emphasis on the personal human ego as the active entity.

According to West-Telluri philosophy, this is simply correct. To like something is an "action" taken by the liker, not by the thing liked.

Most Modern Japanese would presumably, if asked, take this view too, being steeped in the modern Western rationalist perspective. But their language says something else, and I suspect their real thinking contains elements of both perspectives.

So what are the perspectives, and how far are they "Eastern" or "Western" in an absolute sense?

Without getting too deeply into the "background theory", let me explain briefly that modern West-Telluria's rationalist perspective is not "the Western outlook" but a "heresy" base on the legitimate Western outlook.

So in many respects traditional West-Telluria, even as late as the Middle Ages, thinks more like the Tellurian East than does modern Western Telluria.

In Aristasia there was no Rationalist Heresy, but the legitimate characteristics of the West, were still, in subtler ways, "carried too far" in the modern era: which is why Westrenne Aristasians tend to regard Estrennes as their spiritual superiors.

(This is almost the exact opposite of the "inferiority complex" that the Tellurian East feels in relation to the Tellurian West and the corresponding "superiority complex" of the Tellurian West).

Getting back to our tea:

The Western formulation puts maid at the centre. Maid is the "subject", tea is the "object". It is egoic. In terms of religion, it develops into the will-centred faith of Christianity, with an emphasis on sin (that is, faults of the individual and collective *will*). This perspective also exists in Aristasia, particularly in the West.

See this page on the Filianic understanding of "original sin" and its differences and similarities with the Christian concept.

When it is taken to excess this outlook leads to the cultural "malpractice" of individualism (which, in the late Iron Age has happened in both Westrenne Aristasia and Telluria) and when taken even further leads to the outright heresies of rationalism and humanism (as has happened in West Telluria, but not Westrenne Aristasia)

The Japanese formulation – that tea does the action of being liked in relation to a particular person – expresses a quite different perspective, and one that is much closer to the Novarian (and generally Estrenne) outlook. It is a view that modern West Tellurians would be likely to categorize – rather misleadingly – as "animist".

According to this view maid is not the sole experiencing center. The quality of "amity" exists not only in maid but in the tea itself – indeed more importantly in the tea.

Tea is one of the "ten thousand things" of cosmic manifestation that each express (insofar as they approach perfection) small aspects of the Divine Totality.

Between those aspects of the Divine Whole, and the individual being that constitutes "oneself" (which is really another aspect of the Divine Whole, but in some senses more separated from Her – by her sin or her ignorance, depending on perspective – and in other senses closer to Her, being made in Her image) – between those two aspects of the Divine whole exists an Affinity.

That Affinity is seen in the West from the egoic perspective and in the East from the perspective of the Totality of which an external object may act as the representative.

That is the fundamental reason for the two ways of expressing the liking of tea. And of course similar considerations will apply with many other linguistic formulae.

I have expressed all this in very Deanic terms, of course, because I am a Deanist. But the second of these two outlooks is exactly that of much of the Aristasian East – and in Novaria tends to be that tempered with a certain amount of the Westrenne outlook.

Thus it is very close – in broadly analogous terms, not in cultural specifics, and of course excluding the various errors induced by the adoption of West-Tellurian rationalism – to the position of modern Japan.

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Note:

I was talking to Minami-chei about this rather old discussion and oddly enough I found an interesting sidelight on it the next day. Minami-chei said that the Korean expression for liking tea (or anything else) was exactly equivalent to the japanese, but that she (as a mother-tongue Korean speaker) had never thought of its literal meaning as I have portrayed it (although she agreed that this *is* the literal meaning).

Now I would not expect the literal meaning to be consciously uppermost in the mind of a modern-educated person from Japan or Korea, but I do suggest that it is in the deep structures of the traditional thought of Japanese and Koreans. I was interested, therefore, to read this in *The Japanese Today* by Professor Edwin Reischauer:

> The word "individualism" (*kojin shuji*) itself has always been of ill repute in Japan. It suggests to the Japanese selfishness rather than personal responsibility… For a while students used the term "subjectivity" (*shutaisei*) in the sense of one's being the active subject rather than the passive object of one's life.

Now this is surely very interesting. The very grammatical term is used. The whole point of our tea sentence is that the tea is the active subject, taking the action of being-liked. And it is from this precise structure of life that the Westernising student wishes to escape. Japanese tends to relieve the individual of the burden of subjectivity, while Western languages – like the cultures – stress it as a positive value.

As a Novarian I am often told that I am, by West Tellurian standards "unnaturally passive". I tend to wait to be led, although when I am sure of a principle I can be forceful and even unbending.

Some of this may be my age and my own nature, but I would say that Aristasians – and particularly Novarians tend to be "passive" in the sense of looking for the "right" thing to do and expecting a consensus of some sort. It doesn't mean we are followers rather than leaders (we couldn't all be could we?) but rather that in our natural habitat we live by a Norm, or *thamë* both in society as a whole and then reflectively in any group within it. There tends to be a "way things are done" rather than a "way I do things".

One is either following that way or administering it – and if one is administering it one is still following it. Being a "passive subject" sounds negative from the Western – or the Westernised – Tellurian point of view. From a Novarian perspective it is reassuring. It is the surety of following the right way rather than having to invent a way for oneself that will probably be wrong. Ultimately, it is the sense of acting in harmony with the universe and its Creatrix rather than against it. Of treading the steps of the Cosmic Dance laid down from eternity rather than ambling in one's own random fashion.

Leave a Response »

Redheads Saturday, Jun 28 2008

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia7:04 pm

Miss Yuffie *posted some pictures and asked some questions, particularly about this charming picture.*

A topic of interest has been brewing inside myself, and I'm sure, many other of the younger Aristasians. Could there possibly be a red headed point of mind? One that escapes being either Blonde or Brunette? Am I the only one who has been inquiring this? Surely not, I've seen an article on this, correct?

Then, what is the general Aristasian opinion? Blonde and Brunette?

Princess Mushroom answered:

Quelles dessins adorables!

The "redhead question" has often been discussed. As is often the case with things Aristasian, one needs to consider the question under two aspects: Aristasia in Telluria and Aristasia Pura.

1: Aristasia Pura: There are two biological sexes, chelana and melini , commonly termed "blonde" and "brunette" because hair-colour is a secondary sexual characteristic, and chelani, even from darker-skinned Estrenne races, are always fair-haired, while melini are always dark haired.

There is no third sex. Girls with dark fox-red hair are melin, girls with pale coppery hair are chelan. Red hair is occasionally associated with hormonal imbalance that can make for traces of opposite-sex characteristics, but there is still no question that a girl is one sex or the other.

2 : Aristasia-in-Telluria: hair colour has absolutely no bearing on whether one is blonde or brunette. Most Aristasian blondes I know in physical life are actually raven-blondes.

Girls are still either blonde or brunette. Where a girl has characteristics in both sexes, she may, and often does, have a persona (or more than one) in each sex. Personae are regarded as separate individuals, and to a surprising extent often are.

Most girls are purely one sex and have all personae (if more than one) in that sex. They are called "plenary blondes" or "plenary brunettes".

Girls who have personae in both sexes are called "ambis". Most ambis actually turn out over time to be predominantly one sex or the other. There are a few truly ambiguous ambis, but they are in actuality very few.

Other considerations we may mention here:

3 : Aristasia-in-Virtualia : Avatars, whether full 3D moving ones as in Second Life grid or little pictures as here, should have hair-colour consonant with sex, as in Aristasia-in-Virtualia, our characters are true intemporphs. Ambis can of course have an extra avvie in the other sex with a different name and persona.

4: Pictures like the charming ones here are not usually drawn by Aristasians, and so hair-colour may not match sex. The picture above [which Miss Yuffie described as depicting "a blonde dressed as a brunette"] does look like a blonde to me, but hair-colour is not decisive.

When we use such pictures on our sites and such, we do try to keep the blondes fair and the brunettes dark, as we are trying to build an Intemorphic Virtuality. Quite correctly, faced with a picture like the one above, one would use a “cover story” like “this is a blonde dressed as a brunette” – which in this case does look very likely!

2 Responses »

Queen Mayanna House Monday, Jun 23 2008

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia11:53 pm

Queen Mayanna House represents a typical Aristasian establishment.

Queen Mayanna House is what is known as a Lay College. There are many of them in the West, and the main reason for their existence is the same as the reason for the many Brunettes’ Clubs and in recent times Blondes’ Clubs too as well as small residential hotels and pensions. In times past, and still in the East, when a maid was unmarried (as maids often are in Aristasia since the procreative need is rather smaller for such a long-lived and harm-resistant people) she stayed with her extended family or, if she were a magdalin, with the mistress to whom she was apprenticed. In the West, with the

decline – though by no means death – of the guild- and apprentice-system and with so many of the more modern type of unmarried girl preferring to place some distance between themselves and their families, new places grew up in which such a girl might live.

To take a flat alone is not unheard of, but it is very rare. Aristasians have been rather disrespectfully described as pack-animals and it is true that individualism of the late-schizomorph kind has made little headway in the Motherland. Even if they move away from some of the more traditional ways of life, Aristasians require an in-group in which to live and move and have their being.

The Clubs create one such group. They often have particular activities associated with them such as fencing or poetry, and they may meet other like-minded clubs for contests, exchanges of ideas or joint exhibitions of work. Another is created by the Lay-Colleges, some of which have filial ties to the great Universities, others of which are simply small private establishments. As they are primarily living places, their courses of compulsory study are often small. Queen Mayanna House simply requires one essay or major poem per year as a condition of membership: but these essays and poems have often taken their place among the most admired literature in the Western World, for the Annual Opus (as it is called) stimulates the best efforts of some of the finest minds in Trent and Novaria.

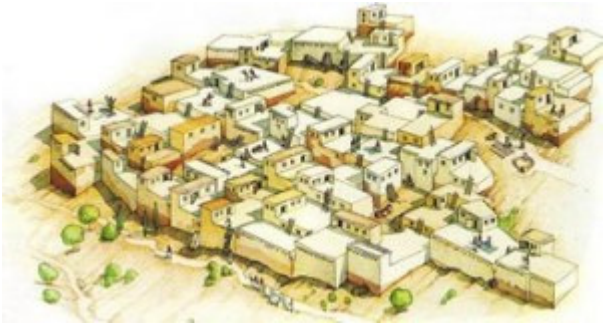
Queen Mayanna is a daughter-house of Goldcrest College, Milchford University, and nearly all its members are Old Goldcrestiennes. This gives the college a somewhat cosmopolitan character as girls from all over the Western Empire, and some from the East go up to Milchford, and a few of them move on afterwards to Queen Mayanna House; so while the College has a largely South-Trentish and West-Novarian character, it does contain girls from many different lands.

From *Lady Carleon Investigates: The Adventure of the Crystal Staff*

Leave a Response »

Cradle of Tellurian Civilization? Friday, May 23 2008

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia6:52 pm



Some people say Asia Minor, where the West is closest to the East, is the true cradle of civilization. The remains of the earliest pre-patriarchal cities were discovered in Asia Minor. Catal Hoyuk (pictured left) is the most famous – and even Troy, which was thoroughly patriarchal, had the support of the Amazoni – the last gasp of Tellurian feminine civilization – against the super-patriarchal Greeks. Penthesilea, the Amazon Queen, was slain at Troy by Achilles at a time when the era of patriarchy was becoming firmly established. It had not always been so. In earlier and more glorious centuries the Amazoni had stormed and taken Athens itself.

Raya Chancandre Aquitaine comments:
The Near East is sometimes called the Cradle of Civilization, referring once to the early patriarchal Empires, and now that archaeologists know a little more, and rather grudgingly, to the feminine-centred city-states that are known to predate them in the same area.

However, traditional science tells us that:

a) Humanity is far older than the ten or so millennia involved in all this

b) Humanity has been in a state of decline since the beginning.

So even the earlier feminine-centred city states uncovered in Asia Minor go back no further than the late Age of Bronze, and still belong to the final fifth of the current World-Cycle. The Ages of Gold and Silver still lie far in the past and occupy a time far longer than the ages of Bronze and Iron (the current Age) put together.

How then can we accept these earliest known – but still relatively recent in terms of the entire Cycle – cities as the Cradle of Civilization?

In terms of materialistic science, we know very little of humanity before the Age of Bronze. We have enough evidence to make clear that these societies were feminine-centred and Deanic. They have left little other evidence of their culture, which allows the "evolutionist" school (which is really a "progressist" school, since serious Darwinism cannot allow of biological evolution over these comparatively short time-periods) to declare that these peoples were "primitive" and to compare them to modern tribal societies – which are, in fact, not "primitive" but decadent*.

What we know from Traditional science is firstly that our ancestresses were our superiors and secondly that they were less "consolidated" – less material. They saw things and beings we do not see (as the old tales make clear) and it is very likely that their main constructions were not on the material plane.

We know that there have been prohibitions, at various stages of Tellurian history, on developments that ritually enacted the descent into matter. Later, each of these prohibitions were lifted as the descent became inevitable and the arts in question were "released" to progressively consolidated ages as part of the necessary process of adaptation to the consolidating tendency of the Cycle.

Some of these prohibitions were:

Upon building in stone

Then upon building in hewn stone (even after this was lifted, some sacred edifices must still be of unhewn stone).

Upon the use of metals

Then upon the use of iron, the most consolidated of the metals, and the one belonging to Sai Vikhe, and being, in Telluria, ritually associated with the patriarchal order.

The word civilization, from civitas: city, means specifically city-culture. In late-Telluria it tends to be used as a term for culture in the absolute since non-city cultures are derogated.

The Sacred City is an important Bronze- and Iron-Age concept and it may well go back further. However, not all cultures are city-based. My personal belief is that there have always been city-based cultures (or something equivalent to them), but that their material element has become progressively greater (or, going backwards, progressively less).

Before building in stone became permissible, cities would have been of wood, and will have left no traces for the archaeologist – though statues of stone were made at that time and do remain. In the earliest times – in the Golden Age – they may well have had no physical support at all; maid's contact with the material realm being peripheral at most and her real life taking place in realms to which modern humanity has all but lost access.

The feminine-centred cities known to archaeology are called "neolithic" or "new stone age" which conjures in the lay mind pictures of primitive brutality. In actuality, cities such as Hacilar in Asia Minor some eight millennia ago, where the statue of Dea is seen everywhere, had two-story buildings constructed around a central courtyard with balconies overlooking the courtyards and hearths upstairs and down.

Nonetheless, the term "new stone age" does have a meaning, since this was the age when building in hewn stone was permitted but the use of metals was still restricted.

So the term "cradle of civilization", if taken in the very limited sense "cradle of lithoidal civilization", could perhaps be accurate.

If it is intended to mean that earlier cultures were not civilizations in the strictest sense, it is almost undoubtedly wrong. If it is intended to imply that those earlier cultures were "uncivilized" in the modern understanding of the term, or even "less civilized", or even "not more civilized", then it is completely erroneous.

"The cradle of the lesser civilization of the current world-era" is something of a mouthful. But it is much nearer to the truth.

Leave a Response »

Government in Aristasia Wednesday, May 14 2008

Aristasian Customs and Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia9:17 pm

The rulers of the Aristasian nations are their respective Queens who are advised by non-elected advisors, somewhat the equivalent of senior civil servants – that is professional managers of State who help the Queen to do what she wants to do.

The job of the Queen, as titular and political Head of State, is essentially to facilitate the Dance of the Cosmos as it is reflected in the microcosm of her nation – not to change the steps, either according to her own ideas or to the latest fashions. Obviously certain changes must

sometimes be made in adaptation to changing conditions, but these are rarely controversial and always tactful. It is the essence of the State to be literally stately. That is what Princesses are trained for from the earliest age.

There are parliaments in most nations, but these are of much less importance than in Telluria. They debate certain subjects and make formal recommendations to the Queen which are usually acted upon, though this is entirely at the Royal discretion. Again these recommendations are rarely controversial.

Most parliaments do not have general elections, but a representative is elected when required – when one resigns or dies. In many cases, though, a representative will serve for a certain limited period such as five years, but it is not usual that all places should be elected at once. The limitation is more because the duty of service is seen as one that should have some term than to limit the power of a member or faction. Though some keen parliamentarians stand for re-election again and again. The job is not too arduous as most parliaments convene only a few times a year.

See Also: "Politics in Aristasia" at the *Encyclopaedia Aristasiana*

Leave a Response »

"Modernism" in Aristasia Thursday, May 1 2008

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia1:01 pm

One of the fundamental differences between Aristasia and Telluria — even when regarded as parallel worlds — is that the rationalist revolution of the 17th Century (miscalled the "Enlightenment"), which has shaped modern Tellurian thought and culture, did not take place in Aristasia. Aristasian science fiction, such as *The Princess and the Captain* explores a world in which technics have developed to a high degree, but are seen as an extension of the traditional metaphysical outlook, and are not the result of a revolutionary rationalism.

Even the Classical Aberration of Greece and Rome, with its republicanism, individualism and proto-rationalism, has no equivalent in Aristasia. In Telluria, this aberration was consciously revived at the time of the Renaissance (literally a "rebirth" of the Classical spirit). In Aristasia the traditional view of the world (as upheld by Plato in Telluria against the spirit of his time) continued unbroken.

In Westrenne Aristasia, a spirit of individualism and a weakening of tradition has certainly manifested itself in recent centuries. However the Westrennes have never regarded this as a "progress" or "advance", and have never adopted an attitude of superiority and condescension toward the ancient world or the East. On the contrary, they regard their own "modernism" as a decline from the highest standard and as somewhat regrettable, while at the same time acknowledging that it has made their particular culture possible.

The fact that the most advanced technics in the West have come out of Novaria — the Western nation most closely adhering to the traditional thought of the East — seems like a paradox only to non-Aristasians. To the Aristasian mind, the strong connexion of Novaria with the wellsprings of traditional intellectuality is precisely the reason for its successful adaptation of that intellectuality to the forms and possibilities of the Iron Age.

Again and again one must remind oneself that in Aristasia technics are not associated with a revolutionary ideology as they are in Telluria, but on the contrary, are seen as the latest application of traditional Intelligence.

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The Three Aristasian Refuges Tuesday, Apr 29 2008

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia10:51 pm

Miss Sakura tells her thoughts:

In the Aethyr I was thinking of the Three Great Refuges of Buddhism: the Acts by which one becomes a Buddhist. These are:

I take Refuge in the Buddha

I take Refuge in the Dharma

I take Refuge in the Sangha

Now we must understand that "Buddha" means the supreme Spirit; the Atma.

The Dharma is the "Wonderful Law".

The Sangha is the Buddhist community or congregation.

What I felt I was told was that the process of becoming an Aristasian is a precise parallel to this. We too take the Three Great Refuges:

I take Refuge in Dea

I take Refuge in the Thamë

I take Refuge in the Motherland

We must understand that:

Dea is the supreme Spirit, the Atma, and the Mother of every soul.

The Thamë is the Golden Order, the Wonderful Law which governs the stars, the Empire and our own

hearts.

The Motherland is the true Home of every Aristasian. By the care and direction of our Puran mistresses we live, as part of the great Familia of the Celestial Empire, which is seen as a saving community. By extension we also take refuge in the sisterhood of Aristasians in Telluria, who are the legitimate and adopted continuation of the Familia in this world.

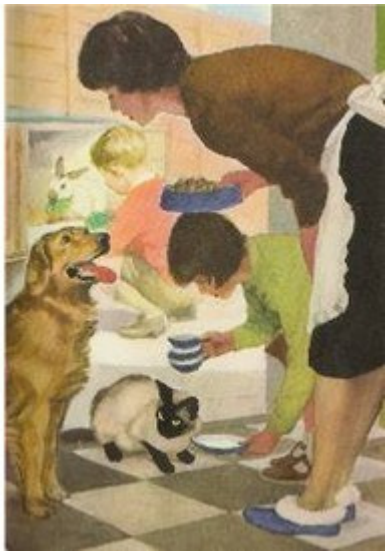
What I felt that I was being told was that the taking of these three Refuges was the way a Tellurian becomes an Aristasian.

I humbly pass this forward to my Elders for their wise consideration.

Leave a Response »

Timeless Motherhood Monday, Apr 14 2008

Aristasian Society and Culturearistasia8:38 pm



Miss Suzanna wondered about Motherhood:
To me, motherliness and motherhood are prime qualities of femininity. [In our discussions it seems to be] a glamorous, powerful, exciting sort of femininity which is in view, and throughout the Aristasia website, I see this also portrayed. So I wonder about mothers, who, in their selfless service to their children, may not always have time to appear well-turned out, but to my mind become beautiful in other ways. What do you think, dear Ladies?

Miss Sushuri Novaryana replied:
You are absolutely right, Miss Suzanna. Motherhood is one of the most important aspects of femininity, and one of the most fundamental Archetypes. God Herself is the first of all Mothers.

Up to and including the 1950s, mothers made time to be well-turned-out (not necessarily fashion plates, but neat and smart); certainly whenever they left the house. They did this because they saw it as a fundamental aspect of motherhood.

A mother represents the most precious and fundamental Archetype we have, and embodying that Archetype properly is as vital to a child's psychic health as feeding her is to her physical health. For a child to grow up (to take an extreme example) applying the sacred word "Mother" to someone in torn jeans with tattoos and a ring through her lip does untold damage. It is the spiritual equivalent of malnutrition – if not of food-poisoning.

In a recently published test, children who were shown pictures of various bongo couples with a few 1950s-style couples included, and asked to pick out "mummy and daddy" almost invariably picked the 1950s-style couples regardless of what their own parents looked like.

This tells us two things:

1. That the archetypes of real parents are alive in the hearts of small children, however starved they may be. They know what parents ought to look like, even if they have never seen an example in their own poor little lives.

2: That however untraditional the 1950s may have been they are still on the right side of that radical break known as the Eclipse. In 1950s parents (and those who are still traditional enough to look much like them) one can still recognise the fundamental and timeless reality.

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Vehicles of Transformation Monday, Apr 7 2008

Aristasian Society and Culture and Aristasiansaristasia8:41 pm

Miss Barbara asserts:
I do believe that a bongo could be transformed into an Aristasian just by sitting in a real car, if she were intelligent enough to know what *real* means. A Trentish automobile, black or maroon, is a little universe, a microcosm of the culture that produces it. It is luxurious, glamorous, sophisticated, elegant, comfortable, and dignified because Trent is all of those things.

But a recovering Pit-maiden needn't wait until she can find a real automobile to experience her epiphany. She can have a similar experience with almost anything from the real world, for everything is a little universe and a microcosm of the larger world from which it comes. If she were to watch one real movie with the knowledge that it was real (and with the conviction that everything in the Pit is truly obsolete), or wear one pair of silky, seamed, sheer stockings, or listen to one wireless program, she would wake from a slumber and begin to allow the fire of Realness and Truth to catch in her heart; she would stop collaborating with the Pit, not because somebody has told her to stop but because she sees it all for what it is: obsolete and shoddy, trivial and banal.

She would begin to walk with dignity and take pride in the right things and never feel self-satisfied with shabby behavior or dress. She would rise above the mire below and happily join her sisters up above the Pit, who are like an angelic chorus flying above the mindless world below. I know she would do and think all of these things, for, you see, I have just described myself to you in this little story.

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